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SUBJECT: FCC COMMISSIONER COPPS EXPLORES UK'S DIGITAL TV TRANSITION PLAN, DISCUSSES UK REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT, AND VISITS EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMAND CENTER.

11. (U) SUMMARY: The UK's transition to digital TV is progressing smoothly thanks in large part to an impressive BPS 200 Million (\$400 Million) public awareness campaign and a BPS 600 Million (\$1.2 Billion) Help Scheme, according to HMG officials. The analog BBC TWO signal in the small town of Whitehaven turned off on October 17 and was replaced with digital channels. In four weeks, the other analog terrestrial channels will also be switched off and replaced with digital signals. This process will be repeated throughout the UK until 2012 when the roll out of Digital TV completes. The Office of Communications (Ofcom), the UK equivalent of the FCC, also briefed Commissioner Copps on UK views on regulatory issues such as food advertising to children, indecency, and the new EU "TV without Frontiers" directive. Commissioner Copps also visited the London Metropolitan Police's new state of the art Command and Control Center (CCC), which is the communications nerve center for London's emergency services. The Metropolitan Police say their CCC is the largest of its kind in the world and is designed to deal with the special or emergency events that constantly take place in the London area. The CCC assists police to monitor events as diverse as Carnival and terrorist attacks. END SUMMARY

Who is Digit "Al" and what is he doing to my TV?

12. (U) FCC Commissioner Michael Copps met in London on October 17 and 18, 2007, with Secretary of State for Culture, Media, and Sport, James Purnell, Deputy Chairman Phillip Graaf and senior staff of Ofcom, and Ford Ennals, the CEO of Digital UK, which is a public - private joint venture responsible for the transition to digital TV in the UK. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Ofcom both have leading governmental roles in the transition. DCMS sets policy for the transition. Ofcom suggested creating Digital UK in 2003 and since then has focused on ensuring that the required spectrum and other infrastructure will be available. A partnership between government and telecoms firms, Digital UK's role is the public face of the transition, which educates and interacts with the public.

13. (U) On the morning after the start of the UK's five year transition to Digital TV, Purnell told Copps that it was going well. Purnell says that HMG's strategy has been to "over-prepare and under-promise" on the transition. He says that Members of Parliament (MP) have been taking this transition extremely seriously, because of the potential public relations nightmare that could occur if it goes wrong. He says the nightmare scenario would be if the media began running stories on "Grannies with no Telly." MP's worry that British media could turn this story into a political disaster in the event that things go wrong. One precaution against this potential scenario is the Digital TV transition Help Scheme. The BPS 600 Million (\$1.2 Billion) Help Scheme is designed to ensure that the elderly and disabled never miss a single episode of a program. The scheme has two parts. The first part is financial. The Help Scheme

will fully pay or partially subsidize the Digital TV converter boxes for the disabled or elderly. For those who meet the poverty requirements, the converter boxes will be free. The more affluent will have to pay a BPS 40 (\$80) fee. The second part of the "Help Scheme" is that a technician will actually travel to the homes of the elderly and disabled to install the converter boxes for them. Purnell says the Help Scheme should provide MP's with an explanation for shortfalls in the event of complaints. In addition, the plan to roll-out digital TV slowly across the country until 2012 means that problems can be isolated and solved before they become widespread according to Purnell. Digital UK CEO Ennals characterized the US plan for transitioning on a single date in February 2009 as "bold."

14. (U) HMG officials estimate that virtually 100% of households in Whitehaven are aware of the digital TV transition now. They also estimate that nationally 85% of households are aware of the impending change. This compares favorably with the estimates of less than 50% in the US. HMG has allocated BPS 200 million (\$400 Million) for a Digital TV transition public awareness campaign. This was funded by the TV tax which all TV owners in the UK must pay. Digital UK has even created a cartoon mascot named "Digit Al" for the transition. Digital UK runs ads on national TV to promote awareness and uses TV captions, headings, and other on-screen devices to create awareness preceding the transition in an area. Digital UK also mails pamphlets to homes one year and again three months prior the transition. The effect has been that nearly 100% of residents in the tiny town were aware of the transition. However, approximately 2,500 of the 25,000 residents were still not prepared in time. Digital UK says that one of the most common reasons given for not preparing was the apparent disbelief on the part of residents that the government would actually go through with the change.

What do wardrobe malfunctions, swearing, and obese children have in common?

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15. (U) Ofcom publishes the broadcast codes for UK television and can impose sanctions for those who break the codes. The process for regulating content in the UK is complaint driven. When a television viewer files a complaint, Ofcom first decides if the complaint is valid, and then decides whether or not any penalty should be imposed on the broadcaster. Graaf suggested that Janet Jackson's infamous Superbowl wardrobe malfunction would not have resulted in a fine in the UK. He says that most likely an apology from the broadcaster would have been sufficient. However, Ofcom does impose fines. Recently, Ofcom fined the BBC after on-air guests continued to use expletives during day time television despite previous Ofcom warnings. Once Ofcom makes a decision, there is no appeals process and the decision cannot be overruled by a higher authority.

16. (U) Food advertising to children is a topic of great concern to both the FCC and Ofcom. Over a year ago, Ofcom ruled that makers of unhealthy food cannot advertise during children's programming. Graaf said that studies showed a 2-5% correlation between food advertising to children and their eating habits. Ofcom says that cigarette advertising in the 1960's also showed a 2-5% correlation to consumer choices. The UK Department of Health has published a list of unhealthy foods and now these foods cannot be advertised during children's programming. However, food manufacturers and restaurants can still advertise their brands. Television broadcasters blame the food advertising ban for an alleged decline in the availability of children's programming on UK TV. They say the reduced advertising revenue has made children's television an unattractive business decision. However, Ofcom disputes this by saying that the number of children's programming was on the decline before the introduction of the ban and the effect is negligible.

17. (U) The EU's new "TV without Frontiers" directive is proving to be both a boon and headache to the UK. The new directive dictates that the place of origin decides the rules regulating TV content. For example, if a broadcaster in Germany creates French language programming and then broadcasts it from Germany to France, German regulators are responsible for the content. Due to its relatively liberal content regulations, many broadcasters are rushing to set up

shop in the UK. However, this is causing some problems for Ofcom. Recently, Ofcom received complaints about programming originating in the UK for Russian-speaking Lithuanians. Ofcom officials say they find it obviously difficult to judge these sorts of complaints. Ofcom says that the real challenge in the future will be to regulate emerging technologies like online social media with no clear point of origin.

Yes, they are watching you

18. (SBU) Commissioner Copps also visited the London Metropolitan Police's new Command and Control Center (CCC). The recently opened CCC appears to be something out of a James Bond movie with floor to ceiling television monitors and retractable walls. The CCC can access over 65,000 closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras in the London area. Police officers in the CCC then use joysticks to move and zoom the cameras in order to direct the officers in the field during an event. The CCC is specially designed to handle the over 5000 annual large events in London such as protests, sporting events, and terrorist attacks. The Metropolitan Police say the CCC is the largest special operating room of its kind in the world. The London Metropolitan Police also briefed Commissioner Copps on their new hand held radios. Police all over the UK use the same digital hand-held radio unit. They say the communications equipment is naturally a compromise between the varying demands of police forces around the country. They say communication in London is adequate, but there are some shortcomings. There is no radio coverage in the longest underground tunnels and base station capacity limits the total number of users despite the available spectrum. The Commissioner also toured the emergency call center that receives "999" emergency calls. In the UK the standard emergency number is 999, but calls to 911 and 112 are also routed to the call center. Police say this is to ensure foreigners in the UK have access to emergency services. The center recently combined 32 separate local centers into four centralized centers. They say calls are increasing exponentially with the increase in access to mobile phones and they expect to receive 23 million calls annually by 2010.

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